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SIR HENRY RAWLINSON ON MODERN EXPLORATION IN EQUATORIAL AFRICA.

[From the London Telegraph, November 16.]

The forty-sixth session of the Royal Geographical Society was opened last night in the theatre of the London University, when Major-General Sir H. C. Rawlinson, president, delivered a highly elaborate and important address.

The president observed that the forty-sixth session opened under very favorable auspices, the list of new fellows and candidates being the largest the Society had ever known. During the last twenty years the number of fellows had risen from 1,000 to 3,000. Nor had there been any diminution of its influence and reputation. During the past year the Society had made itself felt in various ways. They had the proud satisfaction of knowing that it was owing to their persistent and well argued advocacy that the government became convinced of the desirability of sending forth an Arctic expedition—a conviction which the prime minister first communicated to the public through the president of the Society. On another recent occasion they succeeded in persuading the government, at the last moment, to send a commissioner to the Geographical Exhibition at Paris, an evil of some magnitude being thus avoided for there can be no doubt that England would have suffered both in reputation and material interests if, of all the powers of Europe, it alone had been unrepresented at this great international gathering. This congress was attended by all the most eminent travelers and geographers of the age, and numerous questions of high scientific interest and importance were discussed at its sittings, the presidents of the several geographical societies of Europe taking the chair at the general meetings, according to the seniority of their respective countries. It was found that the London society was thus only third upon the list, the Berlin and Paris societies being both earlier institutions; but it was universally admitted that in regard to numbers, wealth and influence, and especially as the patrons of discovery and the guardians of the best interests of geography, it was at the head of this department of science. The

president next glanced at the proceedings of the geographical section of the British Association at Bristol, particularizing: 1. Dr. Nachtigal's account of his memorable journey from Lake Chad, through Baghirmi, Waday and Darfur, to the Nile. 2. Colonel Playfair's report on the Aurés mountains in Algeria. 3. Colonel Gordon's narrative of his journeys in Turkistan and across the Pamir Steppes in connection with Sir Douglas Forsyth's mission to Kashgar. 4. Colonel Yule's notice of trade routes to south-western China, of special importance in the present state of the Burman Chinese question, and others of hardly inferior interest. Coming to matters of general geographical interest which have taken place during the recess, Sir Henry Rawlinson continued as follows: Equatorial Africa, to which the attention of geographers for so long a period has been prominently directed, again comes to the front as the scene of the most interesting and important exploration of the year. In my anniversary address of last May, I ventured to anticipate, from Mr. Stanley's well known intrepidity and determination, that being once launched into the interior of Africa, with means and appliances of the most extensive and efficient character, it would not be long before he had resolved the doubts which have existed since the first discovery of the Victoria Nyanza as to the true nature of that great Nile reservoir — that is, as to whether it was one large sea studded with islands, as maintained by the first discoverers, Captain Speke and Colonel Grant, or whether it was a mere collection of lagoons, as suggested by Captain Burton and Dr. Livingstone, on the strength of native information. This anticipation has now been realized, and I am enabled, through the kindness of the proprietors of the Daily Telegraph and New York Herald, to exhibit to this evening's meeting a complete chart of the lake, as delineated by Mr. Stanley, who for the first time has almost circumnavigated its shores. (Cheers.) The narrative of Mr. Stanley's cruise round the northern and western shores of the lake, which was intrusted to M. Linant de Bellefonds, whom he met at Mtesa's capital on a mission from Colonel Gordon, has been published in the columns of the Daily Telegraph only this morning. The other letters, however, despatched via Zanzibar, and published some weeks ago, have acquainted us with all the main features of this most remarkable journey, which I proceed accordingly to recapitulate. Mr. Stanley, it appears, did not follow the high road from the coast to Unyanyembe, but struck a track further to the east, probably the same by which Mtesa's messengers had previously traveled from Uganda to Zanzibar, and thus reached in 103 days,

including halts, the southern shore of the lake, distance 730 miles from Bagamoyo, having fought a severe battle with the natives on the way, and having also discovered and followed to the lake a new river, the Shineeyu, which rises some 300 miles beyond the Victoria Nyanza, and is thus, as far as our present information extends, the true southern source of the White Nile. Embarking at a short distance to the east of the Jordan's Nullah of Speke in a portable boat, called the *Lady Alice*, which accompanied the expedition from England, Mr. Stanley, with a portion of his followers, succeeded in tracing the sinuous shores of the lake along its southern, eastern and northern sides to Mtesa's capital at Uganda. His description of this very considerable extent of new country — for we knew nothing of it before except from native information — is full of interest to the geographer and would have entitled Mr. Stanley to a very high place among African discoverers if his explorations had been confined to this single voyage. From Mtesa's capital at Uganda, Mr. Stanley followed the western shores of the lake to the River Kagera, the Kitangule of Speke, and then seems to have struck across direct to his station on the shore of Usukuma, leaving the south-western corner of the sea for subsequent explorations. His circumnavigation of the Victoria Nyanza covered about 1,000 miles, and seems to have been verified throughout by a careful series of observations for latitude and longitude. Pending the examination of the register of these observations, we cannot affirm that the positions as laid down on the map, and which differ slightly from Speke's positions, are rigidly correct; but, for all practical purposes, Stanley's delineation of the lake may be accepted as sufficiently accurate and as a great boon to African geography. With regard also to his hypsometrical observations it is interesting to note that, whereas there was a difference of more than 400 feet in Speke's calculations of height for the northern and southern portions of the lake respectively — a difference which first led geographers to suspect that the lake might be composed of separate basins of varying elevation — Mr. Stanley's measurement by boiling water at his station east of Jordan's Nullah gave a result within seventy feet of Speke's observation near the same spot; so that the height of the Victoria Nyanza may now be considered to be determined at about 3,800 feet above the sea. Mr. Stanley intended, after completing his survey of the Victoria Nyanza, to cross the intervening country to the Albert Nyanza, where he hoped, by means of the *Lady Alice*, to make a second voyage of discovery round this hitherto almost unvisited lake; but more recent intelligence from the

Upper Nile leads us to expect that he will have been anticipated in this second achievement by Colonel Gordon or by some officers of the Upper Nile command, as it appears that a steamer has at length forced its way to a point above the principal rapids, from whence the passage to the Albert Nyanza is tolerably free from impediment.

This important news is contained in telegrams of two different dates in August, sent by Colonel Gordon to General Stone, chief of the general staff at Cairo, and as an inaccurate *resume* of their contents only has yet been published in England, I am glad on the present occasion to have the opportunity of reading to you the text of the documents, from copies which have been sent to me from Egypt by Sir Bartle Frere :

1. TELEGRAM OF AUGUST 14, 1875.

The Arabic text of the telegram is very confused, but the contents appear to me to be as follows: We are arrived near to Appudo. They tell us that the river is navigable from here to the mouth of the Asua. In ascending the river from Kerrie to this place we have passed two rapids. The steamer Khedive has succeeded in passing the rapids of Beddin and in reaching Kerrie. This vessel will soon arrive here — that is, at Appudo. The force of the current here is very great.

2. TELEGRAM OF AUGUST 20, 1875.

At this date we are in the province of Appudo, with officers and soldiers of Makedi. Some soldiers from the south have unexpectedly arrived, and have been added to those coming from the north. The Governor of Fatiko has written me a letter, in which he informs me that Kabarega has been intriguing among the Dongolawa irregulars, and inciting them to evil actions. M. Linant has arrived with his soldiers in good health. The governor promises to write the necessary letters. M. Linant had met with Mr. Stanley at Mtesa's capital. Mr. Stanley stated that Lake Victoria Nyanza is very large, and contains many islands. He had navigated the lake from south to north, being quite alone, *i. e.*, without being accompanied by any European. Lieutenant Cameron was eight months previously on the banks of Lake Tanganyika, and desired to proceed towards the west. M. Linant had a fight on the road between Mtesa's capital and Kilwara, with Kabarega's people, near the place where Colonel Long had his battle. Mr. Stanley, having already seen the country on the east of Lake Victoria, desires now to pursue his explorations to the west. Communication between Ugandi, Mtesa's country, and Zanzibar, which had been open, is now impossible, owing to the hostility of the Karagwe tribes.

EXPLANATION.

These brief telegrams are not very clear of themselves, as telegrams rarely are, but, read by the light of Colonel Gordon's letters, written during the months of May and June (and which have been published in Paris), supplemented by Lieutenant Chippendall's report of his exploration up the Nile, which was read at the Bristol meeting, they

become sufficiently intelligible. Colonel Gordon appears during the summer to have forced his way in Nile boats, or nuggurs, from Ragiaf to the mouth of the Asua, the difference of level between these points being over 300 feet. He established stations as he went on at Biddin, at Kerrie and at Appudo. He was at the latter place, 140 miles from the Albert Nyanza, at the end of August, and was preparing to try the ascent of the rapids at Makedo, eight miles in advance, and where he had already established a station. The pacha's steamer Khedive, in the meantime, taking advantage of the rise in the river, had followed in the same course, forcing her way up the rapids at Biddin and Kerrie, and having nearly reached Appudo by the last accounts. The great trial will be the passage of the steamer from Appudo to Makedo, where there are eight miles of continued rapids and cataracts. Baker estimates one single fall at forty feet. If the steamer, with the help of tow-ropes, can reach Makedo, the further navigation of the lake, a distance of 130 miles, is without obstacle. While Gordon was occupied with this ascent of the rapids, his assistant, Chippendall, had pushed on seventy miles beyond Appudo, toward the lake, and had conciliated the tribes of the neighborhood, but had not succeeded in reaching the lake itself. Both he and Colonel Gordon report, from native information, that the Nile leaves the Albert Nyanza by two channels, but where the western stream rejoins the main river is still doubtful. Colonel Gordon is further inclined to give to the Albert Nyanza a general direction of east and west, rather than north and south. He would assign the greatest width of the lake to the latitude of Magungo, where Baker left it, and where a station is now to be established; and he doubts whether the water of this great basin stretches further south than the Equator. The news of Lieutenant Cameron here given in Colonel Gordon's telegrams is, no doubt, of somewhat older date than stated, and was probably brought to Mtesa's capital by Arab traders from Unyanyembe. We know from Zanzibar that our envoy finally left Ujiji for the west at the end of May, 1874. Since this date no news of him whatever has been received at Zanzibar, although the direct route to Ujiji is more open than it has been for years past.

News of somewhat later date than these telegrams has since been received to the effect that M. Linant, the bearer of Stanley's important letter, had been killed, with thirty-six of his followers, in an attack by the Bari tribe, when near Colonel Gordon's station. This lamentable event may possibly retard the execution of this officer's plans. Sir Bartle Frere informs me in a letter just received that his

Excellency Nubar Pacha told him another telegram had been received which confirmed the report of young Linant's death and of Gordon's having been obliged in consequence to give up for the time his visit to the Albert Nyanza, in order to go and punish the tribe who had attacked the party. This is the second son that the venerable Linant Bey (the great irrigational engineer of Mehemet Ali and Ibrahim Pacha) has lost in that country. With regard to Colonel Gordon's expedition, Sir Bartle writes: "Everyone speaks most highly of Gordon and his doings—the khedive and his prime minister, as well as the English residents and American missionaries. He has not only, so they all say, really checked the slave trade and still more the slave hunting, but he has made his expedition almost pay itself by economy and by judicious management of the conquered districts."

THE ENTERPRISE OF THE PRESS.

Before I close this brief account of Mr. Stanley's exploration of the Victoria Nyanza—an exploration which does infinite credit to his energy and skill, and which will be explained to you in more detail by the veteran traveler, Colonel Grant, at our next meeting—I am desirous of drawing attention to the extraordinary munificence of the proprietors of the New York Herald and the London Telegraph in fitting out this expedition entirely at their own expense. (Cheers.) Such munificence far transcends the efforts of private individuals in the cause of science, and even puts to shame our public institutions, enabling, as it did, the undaunted Mr. Stanley to take the field with four Europeans and 300 natives, amply provided with arms, instruments and supplies, and assured of continued support until he had fairly accomplished his work. And I may add, that the courtesy which has placed at my disposal Mr. Stanley's map of the Victoria Nyanza for the gratification of the fellows of the Geographical Society, and for the general instruction of the public, is a graceful sequel to the liberality of Mr. Stanley's English and American patrons in preparing the original expedition. I feel assured, then, that I only express the feelings of the fellows of the Society in recording our warmest thanks to the proprietors and staff of the New York Herald and Daily Telegraph for the service they have rendered to the cause of geography, and in wishing the most complete success to Mr. Stanley's further operations. (Loud applause.)